1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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Sierra Tarascans

231 times petted. One reason for having cats is "because they give pleasure." They are given "pretty" names or names of affection such as [552] *Chulita* and *Negrita* ("Pretty Little One" and "Little Black One").

Cats are fed primarily on tortillas, although they usually are given a little of whatever the family is eating. Kittens are given away to friends and relatives; they are never killed, "for there are never enough cats." Strange [754] cats may be associated with witchcraft and might be mistreated or killed, but this apparently does not happen often. Eating of cats is denied, although young fat kitten is reported to be a delicacy for really poor people in nearby Mestizo towns.

● 235 *Chickens.*—Many people have no chickens and no one has large flocks. They are fed, but receive little care. Fowls are sometimes eaten on special occasions, such as a baptism, when [262] a cooked fowl may be presented to the god- [438] father. Eggs are rarely eaten but are sold to [435] traveling egg merchants from Mestizo towns. An average egg will sell for 5 or 6 centavos, which will buy enough beans for a whole family to have a meal, while one egg "will not satisfy even one person."

Chickens are fed whole corn or, if there are very few chickens, *nixtamal* (*masa* or corn dough for tortillas). Chicks are also fed *nixtamal.* Boxes or baskets are provided for nests. The first time a hen wishes to "set," it is not permitted, but it is the second time. Eggs from other hens are never placed under a "setting" hen. Small chicks are placed under box crates to protect them from "*onzas*" (from [136] descriptions, *onza* in Cherán means a small weasellike animal).

[541] Roosters are raised for cock fighting. However, organized cock fights are held only during the fiesta of Octava.

Pigeons.—Although regarded as a domestic animal, pigeons are really wild. Ownership is [422] not clear. As the birds are not fed, but help themselves to stored grain in the lofts of the houses, ownership presumably would be felt for the birds eating one's corn. The matter seems unimportant, as the birds are rarely eaten, although they are used in connection with the San Juan fiesta. If eaten, only adult [262] pigeons are killed.

231 house lot. Droves of pigs are never mast-fed in the forest. Hogs are fattened on corn and sold; as pork is well liked, they are often killed for food and for lard, now indispensable in European-modified Indian cookery.

Other animal domesticates include fowls and bees. The turkey (kuɾúka),[111] the only native domesticated fowl in the area, is more common in mestizo towns than in Tarascan villages. The European chicken (ʃíkata,)[112] however, is ubiquitous; practically every Indian household has a flock of five or six. A single breed, probably descendent from the Spanish fowls introduced early in the 16th century, predominates.[113] Improved breeds have penetrated only into large mestizo towns on the edge of the indigenous area. Several families in every Tarascan pueblo keep a few hives of European bees in the house lot. Hives consist of rows of small wooden rectangular boxes placed on benches (pl. 7). In some Sierra villages (e. g. Capacuaro) native bees hive in sections of logs hung on the outside wall of the
[263] house. Both honey (for sweetening) and wax
[237] (for religious candles) are extracted from the hives in November or December.

Animal foods in Tarascan diet.—Tarascans eat
262 meat whenever it is available and can be afforded.
252 Chunks of boiled beef are one of the chief ingredients of čuɾípu. This dish is also made of the heart, liver, intestines, and lungs. Other beef dishes prepared in most Tarascan pueblos are: a stew, or atápakua, thickened with *mole;* uiɾíkata, or meat broiled over charcoal or on the *comal*; various cuts fried in the *cazuela*; *menudo*, or stomach lining boiled and served with ground chile; dried salted meat (*cecina*); steamed beef heads (including tongue and brains), called *virría* or *babaqua*.[114]

[235] Neither cow nor goat milk is popular among Tarascans. Some milk cows are kept in the larger villages to supply the pregnant and the sick. Little cheese is made locally, most being brought in from the *tierra caliente*.

Although well liked by most Tarascans, mutton

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[111] The word kuɾúka is apparently onomatopoeic; ʃíkata-ambás or "good chicken," is also used as a name for turkey.

[112] The word "ʃíkata" is Tarascan for a wild grouse, and was evidently applied to the chicken soon after its introduction.

[113] Hens are small, dull brown, often speckled with yellow and black; cocks are reddish brown with highly colored tail, wing, and neck feathers.

[114] Some of the above Tarascan words are also applied to stews and roasts of deer meat. With the possible exception of čuɾípu, uiɾíkata, and atápakua, all meat dishes prepared by modern Tarascans are of Spanish origin.